



# 152<sup>nd</sup> MAINTENANCE COMPANY DEPLOYMENT NEWS



Pride In AMERICA Begins with ME! 152d Maintenance Company, Camp Liberty Iraq

## Commander's Corner

152 Family and Friends- My family and I extend our deepest thanks and appreciation to all those who supported us in the recent passage of my father. I was touched and overwhelmed by the sincere handshakes, thoughts, cards, etc from unit members, spouses and the overall Guard community. It is truly wonderful to be part of such a warm and supportive family. Thank you.

Let's talk about Emergency Leave, and how you can help expedite the process to get your soldier home in time of urgent need. First of all, you need to find out the phone number of the local Red Cross point of contact in your area. This will be a 24 hour hotline that your FRG representative can help you locate. You will need to know your soldier's rank, social security number, supervisor, unit and APO address. If you know the need to have your soldier come home is very near, you can contact the Red Cross and get a case number already established to speed up the message delivery process. If you stay in contact with your soldier, s/he can get the required paperwork filled out ahead of time on this end. In my case, I was at Baghdad Airport within an hour of getting the actual message. Emergency Leaves are priority soldiers, and it took less than three days to get home. Not bad considering the distance and number of travel stops involved. I hope this doesn't happen to your family during your soldier's deployment, but if you are prepared, it makes it that much smoother.

As usual, the 152 soldiers are performing admirably in the heat and dust of our world. We recognize this by giving monthly awards of plaques and coins to the NCO and Soldier of the Month. Soldiers are picked through a nomination and merit process, and are most deserving of these awards. So far we have recognized SPC Cristy Riley, SPC Tyler Bickford, SSG Dave Devoe and SGT Allen Gervais. Outstanding job!

Enjoy your summer, but please stay safe in all your activities. Wear the appropriate safety equipment for the activity you are participating in, and do not operate any vehicle or watercraft while under the influence of alcohol. See you soon.

CPT Moody

### Family Support Group Points of Contact:

CPT Linda Johnson: [Linda.Johnson@ia.ngb.army.mil](mailto:Linda.Johnson@ia.ngb.army.mil) (Iowa)

Mrs. Linda Emonds: [Lindaemonds@earthlink.net](mailto:Lindaemonds@earthlink.net) (Maine)

Mrs. Eva Valentine: [jevalentine2005@wmconnect.com](mailto:jevalentine2005@wmconnect.com) (Washington)



## News from the Top Wrench

Three months down and no rain in sight, I never thought that I would say, "I can't wait to get some rain". Leave is in full swing. There has been some long hours covering those that are on leave. Still waiting for the 21 soldiers from Maine to show up. They should be here by the middle of August. Our mission here hasn't changed as of yet, there will be a lot of rumors going around at home and some of those rumors come from here. Please take these rumors with a grain of salt, a rumor can go around this world twice before we can get the truth to you. We are all waiting for October to get here to see if the weather will cool down. That would be a welcome relief. I hope that all of you had a great 4<sup>th</sup> of July. We tried to have a VTC confrence with the Iowa unit back home, it didn't work so we will iron all the bugs out and try it again.



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Hopefully by the next newsletter we will have an answer to what we will be doing the rest of our tour. My prayers are with each of you there at home.

Any change, any loss, does not make us victims. Others can shake you, surprise you, disappoint you, but they can't prevent you from acting, from taking the situation you're presented with and moving on. No matter where you are in life, no matter what your situation, you can always do something. You always have a choice and the choice can be power.

[Blaine Lee](#), the Power Principle

1SG Grenier Daniel  
Always Professional

## From the desk of the Executive Officer

I hope that you are all enjoying your summer and had a wonderful 4<sup>th</sup> of July. I just returned from two weeks of R&R during the second half of June. I thought that R&R stood for rest and relaxation, but according to my wife Linda it now stands for Raking and Remodeling (just kidding honey). During my stay home I realized how much I take for granted. The privilege of wearing civilian clothing is something that I take for granted. The wearing of a pair of jeans or shorts, t-shirt, and baseball hat is now something I enjoy. Driving a civilian vehicle is also something I take for granted. More importantly, I realized how much my family means to me as we spent quality time together. I hope that while your loved one is home during R&R you spend quality time together enjoying the activities that bring you closer together as a family.

If your loved one decides to mow the lawn or fix something around the house, let them. It may be their way of showing you how much they appreciate all that you do while they are deployed. Please be patient when your loved one is in the process of returning to you for R&R. Once they leave Iraq it may take several days until they are in Maine. Their travel time does not count against their leave. You will have them for the full 15 days. I appreciate all of you who are active in and supporting the Family Support Group, especially Mrs. Fortin. I would also like to thank Mrs. Cullivan and Mrs. Sinclair for the Shrek ears you sent. I will really miss Youth Camp this year and the Shrek ears would look great on the campers. Farewell until next month.

1LT Emonds

## Company Operations

Hello from the mighty 152d. As we continue to serve our country in Iraq we would like to salute you, our family members serving our country by supporting us. We received reports that the 4<sup>th</sup> of July parade was a success. We are very proud and thank our family members who created and stood on the float while waving the Red White and Blue.

This month we have continued to train while we have also continued with our missions. We have been trained on Human Relations, Equal Opportunity, Sexual Harassment, Detainee Handling, Escalation of force, and Rules of Engagement.

As of July 12, 2005 we have received 43 of 51 boxes of internet parts. Within the week I will predict that soldiers who wanted internet installed in their room will have it. I personally cannot wait so I can see my wife and kids via Web Cam. Hopefully they will recognize me with all the weight I have lost. (yah right).

July's Company Soldier of the Month is SPC Bickford. SPC Bickford is the company's RTO (Radio Transmission Operator) Not only does he keep all assigned radios to 10/20 standards he is a asset of communications throughout the company.

July's Company NCO of the month is SGT Gervais. SGT Gervais is an asset to Force Protection. He continues to set the standards for others to follow. SGT Gervais steps up to the plate and becomes the NCOIC of his section when the NCOIC is unavailable.



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Mail has been coming in left and right. Yesterday SSG Hafford and I picked up sixty-four boxes and at least seventy letters. All I can say is keep them coming. One peace of mail can raise the moral of a troop tremendously. Care packages have also been a big success.

**Happy Birthday Alexis Hartin 6yrs old 29 July, Granddaughter of SGT Richard Vigue**

**Happy Anniversary to my wife Laurel Aug 15<sup>th</sup> with all my love, SGT Vigue**

**Happy Birthday to my daughter Jessica July 26, SSG Zbylut**

**"Keep your fears to yourself, but share your courage with others."**

**Robert Lewis Stevenson**

Unit Training NCO

SSG Bear Parker

## TRACK

Another month down, at least from our perspective the time seems to quickly move along. One day turns into the next and I think most of us have forgotten what a weekend is. The soldiers from track platoon are doing an outstanding job on the details/missions assigned. The soldiers continue to help the leadership refine the processes to make the areas we work in a safer place.

This past month, we worked very hard to help make the conditions tolerable while working in temperatures that reached close to 120 degrees. Many areas now have shade and/or air conditioning for the soldiers to work or take regular breaks in. We are still working very long days, but making the best of the situation. There hasn't been much change in our situation or conditions since our last newsletter. As I mentioned last month, due to operation security, I cannot tell a whole lot about the work we do, but I can give the soldiers a chance to express their thoughts on this deployment. This month we asked SPC Rusty Horstman to provide some comments to you.

### **Life in Tigerland, by SPC Rusty Horstman**

"Not much has changed since the first weeks we arrived here. Life here is pretty monotonous; there isn't much to do when we get some down time. A typical day for a troop would consist of going to work on their assigned mission which is not mentally challenging, but we are forced to keep ourselves alert for the safety of our people. This type of work sometimes gives soldiers a lot of time to think about loved ones, which we miss dearly and how we cannot wait to be with them again. Once the duty day ends, you have several options, such as going to the gym, watching Armed Forces Network TV at the MWR (Morale, Welfare & Recreation) facility. This channel is full of military commercials, which aren't very exciting.

The other exciting thing to do is going shopping at the PX (Post Exchange). If you aren't too tired then there is going to eat at the dining facility. There are usually five or so entree's to choose from. You must first decide which items you want to eat. Outside the main entrees there is usually fast food, such as hamburgers, hot wings, or corn dogs to pick from. One of the things we are most thankful for is the outstanding living quarters. It's nice to come back to your room, which is somewhat private and relax a short while before doing it all over again."

### **Platoon Soldiers of the Month:**

**SPC Boyington:** SPC Boyington has done an outstanding job for us this month. When we talked to him the other night, he said his resume was almost complete for doing most of the missions our company is assigned. SPC Boyington has been very flexible and supportive of the different roles he was placed in. He received favorable recognition from senior NCO's and Officers in the 256 Brigade for his professionalism and diligence in his duties.



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**SSG Webb:** SSG Webb worked very hard this month trying to validate driver licenses. He is working with the company licensing official to ensure our drivers have the proper training and documentation before driving military vehicles. He has to do most of the work related to the licensing when he is off shift. In addition, he has done an outstanding job being the backup NCOIC for the mission he is assigned to. This role forces him to learn all the jobs assigned to our missions as well as manage these in the absence of the OIC or NCOIC.

Respectfully Submitted,  
1LT Travis J. Stone

## AUTO 1

Hello family members and significant others,

Auto Platoon is busy here at Camp Liberty performing our mission and trying to beat the heat. It is now the hottest part of the summer here in Baghdad and the temps get up around 120 degrees on some days. A few of the posts that we are required to man, have now been equipped with small shacks with air conditioners which make the duty much more bearable. Along with the heat we still have to deal with sand storms on regular bases.

All the soldiers in Auto Platoon hope that all of you folks back in Maine had a great 4<sup>th</sup> of July. For us here it was a regular work day, although we did have a barbecue at the DFAC with steak, sausage, ribs, and plenty of salad. We also got our fill of ice cream. There is a small lake not too far from where our trailers are and some people like to go fishing there in the evening. It helps pass the time and people get to do something that they would normally be doing back home.

I would like to congratulate 2 members of Auto Platoon for their accomplishments. When the 152<sup>nd</sup> got here in Iraq the commander decided to have a Soldier of the Month and NCO of the Month, to be awarded each month that we are deployed. I am proud to inform you that SSG Dave Devoe was selected as the NCO for the month of May and SGT Allen Gervais was selected NCO for the month of June. Congratulations to both for a job well done. I would also like to welcome SSG Kirk Thurlow on board; he moved to the Auto 1 team in June and is now the driver's trainer for our Force Protection crew on days.

### **I would like to pass on a few messages from the soldiers to some of you family members.**

Happy B-Day to son Kole Aug. 9th from dad. Also happy anniversary Aug. 10th to my wife from SGT Dave Stitham. Mars Hill, Me.

Happy B-Day to Mike Williams 31st Aug. from your sister SPC Sri Lausier. Portland, Me.

Happy B-Day to Mark Pantalone Aug. 27th from your wife Lt. Cynthia Pantalone. Montville, Me.

Happy B-Day to daughter Tanya Aug 12th and grand daughter Lex Aug 19th from SFC Richard Dumas Augusta, Me.

Happy B-Day to SFC Anthony Gray Aug 12th from Auto Plt. Sangerville, Me.

Happy B-Day to daughter Angela Aug 3rd from dad CW2 Michael Rideout. Newburgh, Me.

Happy B-Day to wife Heidi Aug 7th and son Daniel Aug 30th from SSG Dave Rossignol. Wade, Me.

Our next news letter will be sent out the first week of Sept. so long until then.

SFC Campbell

## Auto 2

Here we are, at FOB (forward operating base) [censored for OPSEC], in the city of [censored for OPSEC], Iraq. Most of us are getting used to our jobs as [censored for OPSEC], as well as getting used to the heat.



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I remember hearing about the now infamous camel spider, and that if you see one in the day, it isn't CHASING you, it is trying to get in your shade. That is how most of us YANKS are coping here. We are constantly looking for shade, planning our day, as much as possible, to take full advantage of air-conditioning.

"Let see, leave my room, hurry to MWR and get on a computer... cool off, cross the street to the company office, pretend I need to talk with the First Sergeant, cool off...go to the chow hall... Just kidding top!

It is easier for some of us to stay cool than others, but that is another issue that I am SURE would never get published here! :o) Just kidding again, top! Well there goes my hope for a promotion...

So we are in the beginning in July, and I think we are figuring out how to beat the heat. With the work force I am assigned, hearty thanks goes out to 1Lt. Pantalone and SSG Devoe for their constant search for ways to at least keep us in shade, if not always cool. When we first started working at our positions there was neither shade nor coolers provided at many of our work points. They are doing their best to keep us safe and in good health.

It occurred to me the other day, with all the talk concerning how hot it gets during the day, 'in the sun vs. in the shade.' I was thinking about it...and realized our hot water tank is set at 120 degrees. So if it is 140 degrees in the sun that bottle of drinking water sitting out...is hotter than our hot tap water. And the adage 'but it's a dry heat...' An Oven has dry heat, and the roast still gets cooked. Now will somebody still say it doesn't get hot here?

I was in the MWR the other night, watching sports highlights on AFN, and they were showing a baseball game that was rained out...for someone from Seattle, that was true bliss. I long to be able to use my windshield wipers again! When I get home, to the horror of my wife, I am going to show my kids how to REALLY splash in puddles! I wonder if 'rain angels' are possible?

To all the spouses that question the need for a lap-top computer here, let me say...if you get a great deal on them, they are probably the best valued item here. I use mine to listen to CD's, type rambling e-mails, load digital pictures for sending home, as well as view pictures of my family that have been e-mailed to me. However, watching DVD's is the one feature I didn't truly appreciate until we got here. I can put my headphones on, and watch a TV episode or movie, and for that brief time it's like I am not even here. It is the one escape from this deployment that doesn't yet break military laws, and it is well worth it. At Walmart.com, you can pick up a bargain for less than some people are spending on a phone bill. And it really is a sanity keeper!

Thanks for the letters and packages, they really help, more than I think you will ever know! Well, I think the First Sergeant has some extra duty for me, so I better close now.

By Joel Bottem

## Armament Platoon

I hope everyone back home had a great 4<sup>th</sup> of July. We didn't have any fire works here (which is good for many reasons) but we still had a wonderful meal served up by the dining facility. The weather is still hot but we are midway through July and half way through summer – I hope to soon be telling you that the soldiers are complaining about the cold. In spite of it all your soldiers are doing well and with their heads held high.

All of Armament platoon is not on tower duty; we have several soldiers working with the other maintenance teams. They are doing an outstanding job for the 199<sup>th</sup> Forward Support Battalion (our BN HQ) and they have earned many kudos and "atta-boys" from higher ups.

To everyone back home continue to keep the home fires burning and the yellow ribbon round the ole oak tree.

1LT Wade



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## **Construction Equipment Platoon**

Hello to all Wolf Pack and Wolf Pack family members back home!

Another month down and one month closer to our return! The days are long but seem to pass by quickly and we are pretty well acclimated to the conditions here. The temperature is still gradually climbing and we have seen a few days at the 125-degree mark. The wind has been blowing a lot lately and making a real dusty mess. The mornings start out fine and then the winds pick up and blow the dirt around for most of the day but by nightfall it all seems to settle back down.

As I stated last month leave has started and we have had two soldiers (Sgt Clinton Harvey and Sgt Curtis York) complete the trip and enjoyed the break. We have three more home right now (PFC Carl Lambert, SPC Derek Wilcox and SPC Tom Gordon) and Sgt Gerald Fortin is on his way back here now. The rest of us look forward to our turns and the well-deserved break.

We miss you and love you all!!!  
SFC ST Michel